

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the Abstract with the following paragraph:

Transgenes driven by naturally occurring cardiac promoters have relatively low levels of cardiac transgenic gene expression, and have consequently limited the use of cardiac muscle as a target for plasmid mediated gene supplementation. However, by randomly assembling motifs of E-box, MEF-2, TEF-1 and SRE elements, cardiac-specific synthetic promoter recombinant libraries have been produced. By screening hundreds of resultant clones for transcriptional activity both in vitro and in vivo, a few cardiac-specific synthetic promoters were discovered comprising a transcriptional potency that greatly exceeds the transcriptional levels obtained from natural myogenic and viral gene promoters. These promoters are used to direct the expression of desirable genes in nucleic acid expression constructs specifically to cardiac cells. Thus, these cardiac specific synthetic promoters can be utilized for plasmid-mediated gene supplementation for serious health conditions, such as ischemic disease, myocardial infarction or heart failure. Thus, one an aspect of the current invention is a cardiac specific-synthetic promoter produced by a method that generates a library of randomized synthetic-promoter-recombinant expression constructs containing assembled motifs of E-box, MEF-2, TEF-1 and SRE elements. Another aspect of the present invention is directed to a method using the cardiac specific-synthetic expression construct for expression a gene of interest in a cardiac cell.

Please replace the paragraph 21 with the following paragraph:

FIG. 12 shows the synthetic promoter c1-26 sequence SEQ ID NO: 16 with the regulatory elements marked and with the restriction maps;

Please replace the paragraph 22 with the following paragraph:

FIG. 13 shows the synthetic promoter c2-26 sequence SEQ ID NO: 17 with the regulatory elements marked and with the restriction maps;

Please replace the paragraph 23 with the following paragraph:

FIG. 14 shows the synthetic promoter c2-27 SEQ ID NO: 18 sequence with the regulatory elements marked and with the restriction maps;

Please replace the paragraph 24 with the following paragraph:

FIG. 15 shows the synthetic promoter c5-5 SEQ ID NO: 19 sequence with the regulatory elements marked and with the restriction maps;

Please replace the paragraph 25 with the following paragraph:

FIG. 16 shows the synthetic promoter c5-12 SEQ ID NO: 5 sequence with the regulatory elements marked and with the restriction maps;

Please replace the paragraph 26 with the following paragraph:

FIG. 17 shows the synthetic promoter c6-5 SEQ ID NO: 20 sequence with the regulatory elements marked and with the restriction maps;

Please replace the paragraph 27 with the following paragraph:

FIG. 18 shows the synthetic promoter c6-16 SEQ ID NO: 21 sequence with the regulatory elements marked and with the restriction maps;

Please replace the paragraph 28 with the following paragraph:

FIG. 19 shows the synthetic promoter c6-39 SEQ ID NO: 22 sequence with the regulatory elements marked and with the restriction maps.